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A Chat with Hernan Bas

Miami art darling [Hernan Bas](#) is in New York with a show at the [Lehmann Maupin Gallery](#) and a retrospective at the [Brooklyn Museum](#). He [talks to Blackbook mag](#) about the retardedness of [Basel](#) and his favorite Miami bar, "Kiss 14." I'm thinking he meant PS 14 and the interviewer got it wrong. Unless there's a Kiss 14 out there and it's so under the radar even Google hasn't heard of it.

What are your favorite places in Miami?

I like to go to Pop Life and there's a bar where artists hang called Kiss 14 near downtown. It's as close to a dive bar you can get on the mainland, and not have to pay \$30 a drink.

What's the vibe like there?

It's a lot of off-the-wall local bands, like Schematic records and all these kids who play bongos and weird ass shit. It's a local old haunt. On the beach, the Deuce Bar is the classic dive bar. In the last couple of years at Basel, it gets flooded, and I can't go because it's the hipster capital of the world. Because of that, we go to the Deuce and [Kate Moss](#) is across the bar.

What was Basel like for you this year?

It was pretty laid back. Everyone was so freaked out about how the economy was going to destroy the world, and the art world in particular, and everyone was on their best behavior in a weird way. As much as you can never be ostentatious in Miami, people were trying not to be. The over-over-over-the-top parties were just over-the-top. That was the big difference this year. It's always weird for me, because I've become the unofficial dignitary of the town. Basel turns into a lot of interviews and all my friends thinking I can get them every drug in the planet. I'm always like, "I'm not a drug dealer, by the way." I may want to skip Basel this year and go skiing, even though I've never been skiing in my life.

How does being in Miami affect your work?

I think Miami helps me because I don't find it distracting at all. Economically, it makes more sense. The studio I have in Miami is 4,000 square feet, it's massive and what I pay in rent would get me a closet in New York. I like looking out the window and seeing pelicans. There's something magical about that. The façade of the building next to my studio is built like a castle, with pyres and everything. So I look out my window and there's a castle and a sunset. I'm like, "Where the fuck am I?" It's also not the best neighborhood in the world so it's like: pelican, castle, crack-head. Miami is weird because you can walk 10 blocks and be in the heroin pit—like the Lower East Side, circa 1980. Then you go five blocks the other way and you're staying at the Fontainebleau.